

October 28, 2004 Brucellosis Task Force Meeting

Attendees: Frank Galey (member, chair), Kenneth Mills (member), Jim Cagney (tech advisor), Bill Lambert (member), Erika Olson (tech advisor), Cathy Purves (member), Bill Williams (member), Joel Bousman (member), Rob Hendry (member), Terry Kreeger (tech advisor), Monte Olsen (member), Brent Larson (tech advisor), Donal O'Toole (tech advisor), Scott Werbelow (tech advisor), Terry Cleveland (member), Albert Sommers (member), John Etchepare (member), Shawn Madden (member), Jim Logan (member), Bret Combs (member), Jamie Snow (member), Sen. John Hines (member), Bob Wharff (member), John Keck (tech advisor), Dr. Tom Thorne (member), Brad Mead (member), Temple Stevenson (fill in for Ryan Lance).

Review of Minutes: The minutes from the September meeting in Jackson were unanimously accepted.

Review of Agenda:

Comments by Dr. Frank Galey: He shared with the group his recent conversation with Governor Dave Freudenthal's office. Comments included that there are two alternative paths the Brucellosis Task Group could take; 1. Continue on as they have done previously, 2. Do something significant and consider aggressive, bold proposals. Dr. Galey also mentioned that the United States Animal Health Association's two resolutions made it through largely intact. They involve 1. select agent status, 2. federal partners (CDC) need to continue to move forward to focus on how to deal with the brucellosis reservoir in bison.

Update on Campbell County and Teton County Case (Jim Logan, Duane Oldham):
Minutes on the Teton County Case: Late June, 1 cow tested positive, herd was depopulated in July, contact herd was tested and revealed 2 hot reactors, timing issues (when they came off the mountain, etc), this contact herd maybe the index herd in the Teton County situation, determined through epidemiology that there are 2 herds of possible trace genealogy in Sublette County, these herds will be subject to a field test, quarantine did not get issued when it should have, this will affect marketability, the Livestock Board will take whatever responsibility that they need to, unsure of the level of contact. Group discussion followed on the specifics of the case in Teton County and the relationship with the herds in Sublette County. It was discussed that because there was no mention of quarantine, due to a communication breakdown, to the producer he may be negatively impacted.

Minutes on the Campbell County Case: 2 cattle were field strain positive based on South Dakota State University lab, is this brucellosis or lab error (have to treat it as positive for now), have tested 2,500 animals in a contact herd and had no positive test results (most tested twice), contact herd released from quarantine, index herd still under quarantine, credibility issue of the government from the producers perspective (future reluctance to cooperate), DNA tests revealed that the DNA from the infected cattle matched the DNA from the labs control sample taken from bison, close to resolution, need to handle this with common sense.

Elk Tests in Campbell County Recap- Terry Cleveland: The Game and Fish meet with producers in late September, it was a productive meeting. Depredation hunt to remove

100 elk opened on Oct. 19th. So far there have been 59 usable samples (64 total samples), all negative. They are anticipating a harvest of 70-80 elk out of the 100 licenses. In sum, every thing has been working on time, it has been going well and they appreciate all of the cooperation especially from the producers.

Net Gunning: Is it necessary to spend \$50,000 to net gun elk after the samples have all come back negative? Should the money be spent elsewhere? That is a possibility, but it would be a mistake not to get the best statistics you can in order to prove the case.

Resolution: It was decided that net gunning go forward based on the fact that the more animals that are tested, the higher the confidence rate of the statistics.

Lab Failure: The group then discussed the lab failure in South Dakota. Discussion included: the fact that the lab threw away the tissues, how much growth was on the tissues, the information from the lab is there but the conclusion they drew was wrong, maybe there should be a letter written to express the fact that the state of Wyoming has collected all of this data and we feel that the lab is incorrect and the person working in the lab was not qualified. It was also discussed that the DNA fingerprinting should mean something, however they are being told that they can't rely on it and have to discount it. Recommendation by the group: Someone at the elected level needs to write a letter and explain the lab accuracy problem. It was decided that based on a fact that this is no longer a local issue but an international trade issue.

Public Comment: A change in procedure was brought forth by Sen. Hines and was accepted and Justin Edwards (the owner of the possibility infested herd in Campbell County) was allowed to comment. He commented on his frustrations on the case based on the fact that it his herd is a closed herd, no red flags were found to indicate where the brucellosis came from and the fact that the DNA evidence was being dismissed. He mentioned that all of his other cattle have been determine to be clean by a lab in Iowa. He expressed that he feels that he is taking the blunt of this and it is all out of his hands and there have been negligent actions and no one is taking responsibility. He commented that he needs to be released from this and there needs to be more evidence for a clean herd and the USDA needs to help. When asked if he feels comfortable with the amount of elk testing that is occurring in the area, Mr. Edwards replied that yes he was and he was appreciative of what the Game and Fish was doing.

Group Discussion: The group discussed possible options to help the producer. Discussion included the help from an emergency fund to relieve the producer's pressure. The letter should address the fact the lab protocols weren't followed and a re-evaluation of lab protocol needs to be addressed. A letter to Sen. Thomas, Sen. Enzi and Rep. Cubin may also need to be sent. A personal meeting with the Governor may be needed. A couple of people could bring him the group's suggestions

Motion: A motion was made to draft a letter to urge the USDA to lift the quarantine based on the lab results. Letter should be addressed to the Director of the USDA and the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture. The letter should include the fact that the task force (or State) wants someone elk to review the labs protocol. That would give the state reason to reject the quarantine. The letter should come from the position of subsequent testing and not simply attack the lab. Letter drafters will include: Dr. Jim Logan, Dr. Ken Mills, Dr. Donal O'Toole, Rep. Monte Olson, Dr. Brent Combs, Dr. Bill Williams.

BMP Review: The Task Force was instructed to read through the BMP's and email suggestions to Dr. Frank Galey. The group reviewed the Dept of Health recommendations 1, 2 and 3. Dr. Galey suggested that suggestions on the report would be easiest if made via email.

Jamie Snow presented the Wyoming Department of Health Brucellosis Guidelines: The document is in draft form. She would like to have the task force take a look at it and then it will be shared with other agencies in order to put communication lines in place. She has asked that the group take a look at it outside of the meeting and get back to her with suggestions.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department GIS Mapping Presentation by Brandon Scurlock- Brief update on Kate Belinda's GIS mapping project. Kate is concerned with the data included in her project (lack of complete data set). Group may want to move on a recommendation on how to reconcile this data. Presentation included the current stage of the project, concerns, options for dealing with concerns (cooperation with federal agencies, livestock operation survey), next steps. Does this group have any recommendations or suggestions as to how to proceed?

Discussion: It was suggested that this project should be lead through not only the Game and Fish Department but also through other agency's including the Dept. of Agriculture in order to increase cooperation with the cattle producers. It was mentioned that survey may only produce a portion of the results and thus there should also be personal interviews and discussions at meetings with producers (ex. Wyoming Cattleman's Association Meetings). A suggestion was made that Game and Fish should focus on getting data from areas where the feed lines are located in critical co-mingling areas instead of including areas of lesser significance. They should also define and explain why they are collecting the data. It was suggested that the letter include that this is an action plan that has been proposed by the Brucellosis Task Force not only the Game and Fish Department. And that public information channels could also be utilized to help define the purpose of the action. A suggestion that the letter come from the Governor of Wyoming was made. The study size should be broken down by herd unit. It was discussed that perhaps the best way to get this data should be to invite the producers to a meeting and then ask them to fill out the surveys. Terry Cleveland reported that it may take 3 years to capture the data for all of the herd units. He commented that this is just a prototype project, at this point we should concentrate on the Pinedale herd unit and get it done this fiscal year and then go from there.

The discussion was concluded with the understanding that a focus would be made on the Pinedale herd unit. And that a letter explaining the why the data is needed and what it will be used for would be mailed under the letterhead of a larger group perhaps the Governor.

Break for lunch

Presentation by Dr. Steve Olsen of the USDA on vaccines and immunity in wildlife: The presentation included the regulation of immune responses, characteristic of brucellosis vaccines, strain RB51 vaccine, challenge methodology at NADC, efficacy of RB51 as a calfhood vaccine for cattle, duration of immunity in cattle (booster vaccination

may be needed at 4-5 years), safety of RB51, vaccination of elk S19 or RB51, and other topics.

Summary: In terms of the elk and how they are impacted by vaccines, they are much different than the cattle and bison in their response (the cells react differently). They have a good DNA fingerprint, but there is more to learn and it can't be relied upon solely. It is still in development

Discussion: What do the isolates look like with the addition of Wyoming information? The answer was that they are unsure because they don't have the data. What are the differences between bacterial brucellosis DNA in humans and animals? Multiple generations of change occur in Brucellosis even before it is passed on.

Presentation by Dr. Randy Berrier of the Colorado Serum Co. on the process to bring a new vaccine market: A packet regarding the USDA memorandums detailing the process for creating a new vaccine was handed out. The presentation included: the total cost (both federal and private) for developing and researching a new brucella vaccine, the classification of the strains of the vaccine by the CDC, the timeline for creating RB51, differences of calfhood and adult vaccinations, reduced vaccinations administered upon entry in other states, and other topics.

Discussion: The concerns and difficulties of dealing with sub-unit vaccines was discussed. What are the indications to determine when boosters need to be given was addressed. Dr. Randy Berrier said that in a high risk area, he would give booster vaccines every year. A reduced dose in the fall is recommended. Is big is the market for RB51? As long as there is a demand they will continue making it. Is it sold abroad? Yes but there are companies abroad that also make this vaccine. What are the cost differences between a regular dose and a reduced dose? A regular dose is about \$.75 and they are not sure about reduced doses because there are many variables.

Presentation by Dr. Gerry Andrews on the problems with existing vaccines: There are some problems when dealing with a live and tenuous vaccine they include; variable protection, reactogenicity, incomplete genetic characterization, and immunization regimen is not optimized. Sub-unit vaccines (pieces of the cell of the bacteria rather than the entire thing) are another option to consider. This can be considered with brucella vaccines.

Panel Discussion regarding the issues with existing brucella vaccines (S19 and RB15) with Dr. Steve Olsen, Dr. Randy Berrier and Dr. Gerry Andrews:

Questions and Answers-

Question for Dr. Olsen- Have there been any RB51 mutations?

Answer- No, RB51 is stable.

Question for Dr. Andrews- You mentioned that there are 30 proteins to study for the sub-unit vaccinations, how many total proteins are there?

Answer- There are 30 proteins that have been studied, those 30 are a miniscule number in the total number; this is a very labor intensive, time-consuming process.

Question for Dr. Andrews- Are sub-unit vaccines a new thing or something that has been on going?

Answer- This is a proposed study at the very beginning stages. The approach is sound; it is well documented and justified in the literature.

Question for Dr. Olsen- Is the way we are vaccinating elk a good investment?

Answer- I don't know, if the 20% you are vaccinating is successful then I think it is worth it. It is probably a management decision. It is better to do something than nothing at all.

Question for Dr. Olsen- What are some kinds of research projects that we can do in state?

Answer- Basic research is going to be 5-10 years bottom line. You need basic research that can be applied to the field. Thus I would encourage basic research. There are a number of things that you can do here in terms of vaccinating elk and cattle and studying the response. We can collaborate, and even if you don't have the facilities we can work together to do this research. I can't do all the work myself, but if we can work together that helps me. You have as much knowledge as we do on this.

Question for Dr. Olsen- What is your take on the concept of pursuing research on bacteriophage therapy.

Answer- There are two people in Rochester who have studied this extensively. There is a problem in that there is no data that says that this does or doesn't work. There is some hope that there will be a research project that will determine if this does or doesn't work. The problem is funding. In your recommendation I would say to look at other things that might be beneficial besides the phag therapy.

Question for Dr. Olsen- Do you have any information about the comparison on S19 and RB51?

Answer- If the committee feels that research needs to be done between RB51 and S19 they need to recommend that to me.

Question for the panel- Has anyone looked at to see if we need a different protocol for vaccinating calves and if so someone needs to start telling us we need to do it.

Answer- We need to conduct a study to determine what the appropriate age groups are to vaccinate. A vaccination at any point is better than no vaccination at all.

Question for the panel- Can we have a discussion on adult vaccinations?

Answer- Dr. Olsen- You want to maximize your protection even if that means that they might not be able to determine effected animals. It is best to try and prevent injection. We want to truly eliminate brucellosis. We don't want to get to the point where because we have masked is we are unable to determine if it is still prevalent. If you are looking at eliminating disease then you have another view point then if you are simply interested in protecting a herd.

Question for Dr. Berrier- Can you discuss the oral vaccinations with Reindeer?

Answer- It was not successful. It was a bad deal.

Wildlife Recommendations- The group discussed ideas that were brainstormed concerning wildlife recommendations.

Discussion on Brainstrom idea #2a-

Are there other times of year that animals would be harvested? No, the elk have to be

available and harvest has to stop before Jan 15th because of brucellosis transmission to humans. There are other options for reducing numbers besides hunting. Contraceptive measures are an option and can be done at any time. Contraception of elk should not be ignored.

We have elk herds that are above objective, but I think that we will be able to bring those to objective. The main issue is that we have a high concentration of elk in small areas because there is a loss of habitat.

Decision- The timeline of 2 years was removed from the sentence. Explore all options to achieve this was added.

Discussion of Brainstorm idea #2b-

This is an issue of tolerance of landowners. Winter range on private land needs to be addressed. Herd unit objectives are a public process in which the public guides the herd objectives. These objectives are set as a function of public policy. Re-stating public policy in this document should be done in order to highlight importance. Brainstorm idea #2 both a. and b. should be BMPs instead of recommendations

Decision- It was decided that there was too much detail in both 2 (a and b) and they should both be removed from the recommendation.

Discussion of Brainstorm idea #3 on habitat- The inclusion of an adequately funded habitat improvement and protection fund was included to the paragraph. A need a fund to maintain and/or enhance habitat was discussed.

Public Comment-

Mark Wendlin (Ryan looking for spelling and title here), President to the Wyoming Wildlife Federation- In terms of elk conservation, when you have to explain this to out-of-state hunters you are going to have a public relations issue. It is going to take a lot of education for people to be able to swallow that thought.

John Duncan, Section VMO. Highlighted the good faith and cooperation that has been exhibited by the producers in this area. These producers have really stepped up the plate on this issue. The veterinarians in this area have been very supportive; they have been associated with every test that has been done. Tests and results have been done in a very timely manner. When he saw Justin Edwards speaking today, he saw him at the end of his rope. He doesn't know how forthcoming producer cooperation will be in the future if something doesn't happen soon. The directors in APHIS are contently touting science-based policy I would like to see it applied in this case.

-----Meeting Called to an End -----

Day 2
October 29, 2004
Meeting Call to Order
Review of Ground Rules: Duane Williams, CES
Announcements

Continuation of Discussion on Wildlife Recommendation #3 (Easements, etc..)

It was decided by a group vote to leave in the wording regarding zoning as long as it was worded right. Further discussion included; the terminology surrounding easements, access issues, landowner education and outreach.

Wildlife Recommendation (Feedgrounds)

Question to Game and Fish Department by Dr. Donal O'Toole- Is there more of a prevalence of disease in smaller, crowded feedgrounds vs. larger open feedgrounds? The answer was it may not matter; it is the feedline that are the issue. If you are able to move the feedline around then that may help. So if you had more of a space to move the feedlines around that would help. Is this an issue that needs to be addressed by this group, possibly as a BMP or a pilot project? It was decided that the group would like to see it investigated.

Wildlife Recommendation (Research)

Dr. Galey asked how the group would like to see the list or research addressed? It was decided that a sub-committee should be formed to address this issue. They should have the list ready for the December meeting. The group should also prioritize and consider funding. The research subcommittee will be: Jim Logan, Terry Kreeger, Kathy Purves, Albert Somers, Donal O'Toole, Tom Thorne, Ken Mills, Joel Bausman. Chair will be Terry Kreeger. The group will be charged with setting priorities for research and determining who will handle the funding. The group should focus on both cattle and wildlife. The report will have one recommendation on research that includes both cattle and wildlife. The research sub-committee report will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Wildlife Recommendation (Bison Populations)

Should this group make any recommendations on bison populations? This area is dependent on the Bison EIS (Draft ROD due summer 2005). What message do we want to send with this? Explore all options for the management of wild bison. The Governors Office and the AG's Office were instructed to come up with a list of options to be presented at the next meeting. Ryan Lance, Erika Olsen and Brad Meade will be on the committee to come up with these suggestions. Arnold Gertonson (spelling) will be a special consultant to this committee. A research report by this sub-committee will be given at the next meeting.

Wildlife Recommendation (Feedground Elimination)

Discussion on this topic included the fact that concentration of animals leads to disease. An opinion was raised that in order to eliminate brucellosis you must eliminate feedgrounds after a period of test and slater. A program for the elimination of seropositives and then elimination of feedgrounds needs to be looked into. The question about the possibility of eliminating the positives animals but not closing the feedgrounds was also addressed. A pilot test maybe needed in one area to determine what the loss of elk would be to determine the effect on the numbers of elk. The state may also need to know what the potential numbers of loss will be in order to determine if it is socially acceptable. There is also a need to look at the impacts to other wildlife species. The pilot test would not give you a representation for all feedgrounds because they are all different. If you close the feedgrounds in Sublette County, there will be nowhere for the elk to go. There needs to be a look at other options for addressing this issue. You can't eliminate

feedgrounds without eliminating ranches. If you push ranchers too far you are going to compound the problem by forcing ranchers to develop and that is worse for elk. Closing feedgrounds will present a huge cultural change in western Wyoming, and some feel that is not within this task forces power. It was brought up that you can't eliminate brucellosis without eliminating a good portion of the elk and starting over, and they are not prepared to do this.

Discussion included of the possibility of presenting the two alternatives with a list of associated costs and the analyzed risk to the Governor. The presentation should include a very detailed explanation of why this is the case.

Options:

1. Close the feedgrounds

2. Manage for brucellosis

You can't eliminate feedgrounds until you are absolutely sure that we have solved the bison problem. You can live with a seroprevalance rate of 1-2%. You can't live with the elimination of feedgrounds. It is too early for us to concede defeat to this disease. The group doesn't have to eliminate feedgrounds and change the culture of Wyoming to eliminate brucellosis. There are some things that haven't been talked about yet, but with the help of all parties the group can work towards elimination. It is all going to take time, but it is possible. Long-term consideration of the fact that Wyoming may be regionalized off from the rest of the country because of brucellosis needs to be discussed. Eliminating the rancher means eliminating open spaces. There needs to be time to allow for the cultural change, closing feedgrounds is not something should be pressed until the citizens are prepared for it. You cannot say that the state has fully tried to eliminate brucellosis in the past. They have tried, but have not tried everything (with the necessary funding).

They have in the past addressed this from the Band-Aid approach, if we really want to be serious we need to do it with the objective of eliminating brucellosis with our eyes wide open, it might take 10-15 years but it is worth the try. Whatever recommendation the group gives to the Governor is going to come with a price tag, but it also has to come with a detailed explanation on why this funding is necessary. APFIS is not going to give Wyoming brucellosis free status if the state is not moving toward eliminating brucellosis. This is a wildlife problem; APHIS may not be able pay if this is no longer a livestock problem and is only a wildlife problem. APHIS will not support anything that does not eliminate brucellosis.

Dr. Ken Mills suggested that under Wildlife Recommendation (Feedgrounds) that the language should say: feedgrounds should not be eliminated. He proposed the group vote on this issue. The vote will resume after lunch.

Wildlife Recommendation (Corrals)

Discussion: Corrals will give you an adequate assessment of what is really going on. It is important that it is corrals, portable or permanent. For the long-term trapping elk in portable corrals is not a good option. The group did not limit the wording in this recommendation. It was discussed that may they should leave it up to Game and Fish; they are the experts at trapping. The group wondered if they needed to address this recommendation here, or should they just allow Terry Cleveland to address it in his funding report? It was decided that if you are going to have corrals at all feedgrounds, you might as well have a permanent structure on all of the feedgrounds. Accessibility in order to work with portable corrals may not be allowed in the winter. This recommendation should go under recommendation #1.

Recommendation (Economic Impacts)

Discussion: Cost and benefit studies should be done to determine the impacts of one option vs. another option. There has to be some kind of comparison in order to help make decisions. The task force should come up with a series of options and those should all be well researched so that someone can make the best decision. There is some concern about how the studies are done and that they may not be able to adequately determine the real situation. It was brought up that without actually eliminating feedgrounds; they are going to have to rely on educated estimates to determine the impacts. This recommendation will be moved to the research committee.

The research committee will come back and report to the group what they have decided to do with economic impacts.

Recommendation (Education/Outreach)

Discussion: Who should develop this education/outreach? Groups to include: Wyoming Livestock Board/ Wyoming Game and Fish Department/ Wyoming Department of Ag/ Wyoming Department of Health/ Cooperative Extensive Services/ APHIS. The Governor will decide who will lead this. The Governors Office should be the lead for this education/outreach. Is this something that can be done with internal funds? The best option maybe to put the appropriate funds into the Governor's Office.

Recommendation (Affected Tissues)

Discussion: More appropriately placed somewhere else. Move to regulatory committee. Some wording may need to be added to ensure that we can comply with the rules relating to select agents.

Recommendation (Enact Legislation to Prevent Private Feeding of Wild Ungulates)

Discussion: The county code enforcement officer already enforces this recommendation. What is the extent to which it is enforced? Should we leave this in here and let the legislators move it forward? This is a statewide issue and should address that way with the potential long-term effects. This should be give to the Travel, Recreation, Wildlife and Cultural Resources Committee of the Legislature?

Recommendation (Task Force Follow-Up)

Discussion: This task force should continue to meet annually until the problem has been remedied. The Governor and Legislature should convene this task force once a year to ensure future funding. The additional meetings will be to evaluate the progress on this teams recommendations.

Recommendation (Governors direction to the GYIBC's)

Discussion: Any little bit helps. GYIBC is the way we can get the agencies to the table. The GYIBC is a direct product of the first brucellosis task force. There is a problem that there are many opinions on what is wrong with the group. The ground rules in place are slowing the process. Re-addressing the GYIBC focus and more aggressively addressing its goals, mission and objectives should be the wording.

Recommendation (APHIS Considering Expanding Resources)

Discussion: We are already asking APFIS to spend a considerable amount of money. It was discussed that the group should ask the other federal agencies to help fund, or at least encourage them. It is fair for everyone to help participate. Ask for help from the USDA

and USDOJ to fund the eradication of brucellosis. This may include the use of non-traditional management practices.

Break for Lunch

Recommendation (DNA Fingerprints)

Discussion: This will be a tool available at the state labs. There needs to be the ability to search for DNA matches with a database. Generation of numbers for the global database can be done at the State Veterinary Laboratory. The groups felt that this was important and should be done at the State Lab; it is not a cost issue at this point.

End Discussion on Wildlife Recommendations

Closure of Feedlots-

Discussion: What is the "foreseeable future?" Can this group can see that far down the road. The recommendation is written as a non-proposal. As a group we should be able to say that it was "it actively discussed, actively considered, and dismissed."

Vote on the statement of: "Brucellosis coordination team does not recommended the closure of any feedgrounds in the foreseeable future."

(Terry Pollard, Ryan Lance and Shaw Madden were not present)

No not recommend closure- 10 people

Do recommend closure- 7 people

Some in the group wanted to highlight that they were voting no against this way the question was proposed, not against ever closing feedgrounds.

Dr. Ken Mills and Brad Meade and Jamie Snow and John Etchepare will consult to write the dissenting opinion.

Game and Fish Presentation by Bernie Holtz and Tom Thorne on limited test and removal: Summary: No reason to eliminate positive bulls. Testing may or may not be needed. There needs to be a distinction between high-risk and low-risk infected elk. We need to come up with a situation where we are not slaughtering every elk that comes across as positive. When the prevalence number comes down, you may not need to do this every year. If it can be proven to work, it would be extended to all 23 feedgrounds including the National Elk Refuge. This is not 100% accurate science, the information is not being used to test hypothesis. Tried to describe the elk herds in terms of age and sex, the data can then be used to plug into a model that will allow you to track births and deaths. Pinedale herd had been difficult to model (because the population is not closed). Using a hand calculated model to describe the herd (2,000 to 2,100 elk). Data indicates that the population would decline 40% in three years by removing 107 elk (per year) in the critical age classes. 40% is probably a worst case scenario, because the seroprevalance would decline as time went on and hunting adjustments. 40% would be a maximum total population lost.

Discussion: There would also be fewer abortion loses theoretically that may need to be factored into the model that may mitigate some of the loses. (7% of calf crop annual loss due to brucellosis). The number you eliminate would also go down each year, which means it would be less than 40%. There is data that older cows are less than likely to shed as many organisms. Hand vaccinations would also be given when they were processing and that would also reduce the number. (Hand injection is more efficacious). How many

cow elk are harvested currently in the Pinedale unit? Currently hunters are harvesting 285 cow elk. If you are taking 285 then why do you have a population decrease? They were taking the additional reduction after the hunting harvest. The Game and Fish has the ability to not reduce the population numbers, however you would upset hunters. The first couple of years would only be a trial period; there would be the ability to change the process. The danger you run is the potential interchange between elk of different feedgrounds. To have a completely accurate test, you could not do it by just closing one feedground. Problems- How are you going to dispose of the removed elk? You could haul them off, but many of the feedgrounds you cannot get a truck to. Is there anything that prohibits the donation of the meat to some group? That would need to be looked at very carefully. It can be done, but it can be very costly. What about pet food? Anytime you are dealing with the carcass, anyone who has to process that carcass is at a high risk. Is there a greater risk of eating an infected elk vs. an infected cow? It needs to be addressed very carefully; all of the risks need to be identified. Montana gives away bison meat, what is the difference? In Montana, the Dept of Livestock field dresses and removes the carcass to give away. The Tribe will sometimes come out and field dress the animals, the Dept. of Livestock is there and has the Tribes sign a waiver, provides latex gloves and they take away the reproductive organs. The waste is handled carefully and is taken to a landfill.

The information from this initial study can be used to guide further projects. It maybe that when this first study comes out that it is not carried forward. We also need to understand that this may not be socially acceptable; the Governor will have to decide that.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department- Funding Proposal-Terry Cleveland:

This will be incorporated into the task forces report. There are several temporary, non-benefited employees whose positions are funded by APFIS. The G&F is proposing to make these full-time positions. The funding needs presented are in addition to Game and Fish funding.

Group Discussion: Are there items in here that you have already budgeted for currently? Such as snow removal? What we currently have budgeted for is temporary funding. The nation is losing money for this type of research, and we cannot depend on this "soft money" in the future. Does this address statewide surveillance? No it does not. Test and slaughter is not included in this budget because it has not been decided as an option yet. If we decide that, we will need to talk about funding. With the addition of the new positions, the rest of the budget is just to keep the program going as it is today. It does not address the new resolutions. Will this budget help us to get back to a brucellosis free status?

Director Cleveland will condense this budget and will then provide it to Dr. Galey who will include it in the report.

Surveillance Testing Funding: What type of funding will we need? Who would be the right person to decide what type of funding we may need? How much would we need right now for the testing? Livestock Board has submitted a \$50,000 request in a supplemental request. There is a need to make sure that there is not an overlap but rather work toward a coordinated effort. It is going to be up to the agency heads to work through this draft to coordinate potential budget requests. There is a problem in that many agencies have already submitted their supplemental budget requests. The people who have the expertise should coordinate to work through how best to coordinate the budget

issue. The problem is that we are a body that makes recommendations. It is out of our hands as to if the Governor or the Legislature wants to continue to fund it. If this group wants to meet next year, we need to get it into someone's budget. We need to get a draft report to the Governor that has the recommendations prioritized. A prioritization needs to occur at the November meeting. The task force will decide priorities via email before the November meeting, a discussion will be held during the November meeting to go-over the priorities. The group will be asked to reply to Dr. Frank Galey with their top 5.

Public Comment:

Justin Edwards (Producer with the quarantined herd in Campbell County): When the report from Dr. Logan and Dr. Combs goes to the USDA the DNA data should be included, they can ignore it if they want, but I think it would be a great disservice if this was not included in their report. The report should also include the fact that the lab reports were determined by an unqualified lab technician. I would like to see this in the record.

Meeting Adjourned: The next meeting will be in Lander, WY